



F/O. Stodart comes in to land with the Luton Buzzard. The split flaps can be seen in their fully down position. (Flight photograph.)

A BUZZARD in its ELEMENT

Flying the Latest Ultra-Lightweight : Sailplane Characteristics of the Luton Buzzard : The Pleasant Pusher

By H. A. TAYLOR

FEW people who have had any experience of the pusher type of aeroplane will deny its charm, and this type has always appeared to me to be particularly suitable for the use of the private pilot who flies for pleasure alone. He or she, of course, is the pilot to whom the lately revived ultra-light machine is most likely to appeal, for few of these machines are designed to have the performance demanded for serious long-distance travelling.

In the new Luton Buzzard (described in *Flight* of June 18) Capt. Latimer-Needham has endeavoured to provide a machine with the pleasant features of the pusher yet possessing a performance which would enable it to be used for serious cross-country work in reasonable weather. With his experience in the design and construction of sailplanes, it might be expected that his latest creation would embody those features of the sailplane which make for air-borne efficiency, and the Buzzard is clean enough, for instance, to necessitate the use of split flaps in order to steepen the glide and reduce the period of natural float while holding-off. It is worth noting, however, that, with a landing speed below 30 m.p.h., a mild tendency to float is of small importance even when fields are being used, and flaps in

this case can still be looked upon as pleasant luxuries which enable the pilot to stretch or shorten the glide at will.

The wooden structure of the Buzzard is simple, the engine is accessible and—of greater importance to the prospective owner—the outer sections of the semi-cantilever wing may be quickly removed, leaving an actual storage width of 7½ ft.

For preliminary flying experience with such a machine the conditions at the little Barton aerodrome were far from ideal. Though an almost entire lack of wind allowed one to use the longest run, the grass was so long that this lack of wind proved to be a distinct handicap. Naturally enough, the grass both spoilt the acceleration and reduced the available lift at the critical speed. Before entering the machine I had, in fact,



LUTON BUZZARD

Specification with Anzani Engine.

Weight (including equipment)	...	...	...	600 lb.
Disposable load	...	...	...	200 lb.
Length overall	...	...	...	20 ft.
Span	...	...	...	40 ft.
Span (wings detached)	...	...	...	7½ ft.
*Height	...	...	...	5½ ft.
Maximum speed	...	...	...	85 m.p.h.
Cruising speed	...	...	...	75 m.p.h.
Endurance	...	...	...	4 hours.
Stalling speed	...	...	...	25 m.p.h.
Initial climb	...	...	...	450 ft./min.
Price	...	...	...	£325
Makers	Luton Aircraft Ltd.	Barton-in-the-Clay	Beds.	

The designer, Capt. C. H. Latimer-Needham, in the cockpit of the Buzzard. The machine can be flown comfortably without helmet or goggles. (Flight photograph.)